Growth of software industries

729. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of companies registered with the Software Technology Parks of India;

(b) whether it is a fact that STPI has cancelled the registration of nearly 3000 technology units;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether such decisions would not affect the growth of software industries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) As on 31.03.2004, 8180 units were registered under Software Technology Park (STP) scheme. The list of these units is available at Website http:// www.stpi.soft.net in pdf format.

(b) and (c) As per the Exim Policy, the Letter of Permission is valid for three years from its date of issue within which the unit should implement the project and commence production and would automatically lapse if an application for extension of validity is not made before the end of the said period. Accordingly, an intensive review of non-operational units which were registered up to March, 2000 has been carried out and the registration of 2803 units which did not commence operation had since lapsed.

(d) No, Sir.

Collection of USO levy fund from operators

730. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a USO levy is being collected from various operators;

(b) if so, the amount of money collected so far, year-wise and the other details arising thereof;

(c) whether the entire amount has been transferred to the USO Levy Fund Administrator and if not, the balance accrued year-wise and the cumulative balance status; and

(d) the steps initiated to ensure the full transfer to these resources?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details of amounts collected from the telecom service providers towards USO levy year-wise are as under:—

(In Rupees Crores)

Year	USO Levy Collected
2002-2003	1654
2003-2004	2143
2004-2005 (upto 31.10.2004)	1629

These amounts are credited to the Consolidated Fund of India in the first instance.

(c) No, Sir. Only such amounts as are appropriated by the Parliament are placed at the disposal of the USO Fund Administrator. Year-wise details of the amounts transferred and the balance amounts are given below:

Year	Amount Transferred to USO Fund Administrator	Balance *i.e.* Difference between US Levy collected and transferred to USO Fund Administrator	Cumulative Balance
2002-2003	300	1354	1354
2003-2004	200	1943	3297
2004-05 (upto 31.10.2004)	200	1429	4726

(d) As against the amount of Rs. 200 crores transferred to USO Fund during the current financial year, the Ministry has raised a demand for Rs. 2700 crores at the Revised Estimates stage.

Outcome of the meeting of Tata and VSNL

731. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a certain amount has been set off from the reserves of the VSNL by the Tata VSNL in a special board meeting as carrying cost of the asset;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government nominees had agreed to this proposal and if so, the reasons thereof; and

(d) whether the decision is in keeping with the shareholders agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. Decision to this effect was taken in 140th Board meeting of VSNL held on 04-03-2004.

(b) The 140th Board meeting held on 04-03-2004 contained an agenda item "To consider and approve the reduction in the carrying values of operating assets as on December 31, 2003 under the provisions of Section 78 read with Section 100 of the Companies Act, 1956." The proposal amounted to reduction of value of fixed assets of company from Rs. 1862 crores to Rs. 906 crores by way of restructuring and utilization of an amount of Rs. 956.41 crores in the Securities Premium Account to effect the downward revision.

(c) This was approved by the Board including the Government nominees. The purpose of carying out the exercise was to reduce the burden of old high value assets on the company by writing down those assets; thereby making the company more cost-efficient in the competitive market and to be able to adjust such reduction against the Security Premium Account while it is permissible.

(d) After approval of the Board, same was notified to the Bombay Stock Exchange and National Stock Exchange under the listing ageement. The